1489. t. 84.

MODERN MANNERS:

IN A SERIES OF

FAMILIAR EPISTLES.

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MODERN MANNERS:

IN A SERIES OF

FAMILIAR EPISTLES.

Why, let the ſtricken deer go weep,
The hart ungalled play;
For ſome muſt watch, while ſome muſt ſleep;
So runs the world away.

HAMLET.

LONDON:

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M DCC LXXXI.

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ERRATA.

Page 28, line 13, for *Pindar* read *Pindus*
—— 32, —— 5, for *gives* read *lends*
—— —— 7, for *lends* read *give*
—— 64, —— 4, for *Crotchet* read *Crotchini*
—— 74, —— 13, for *But* read *And*
—— 75, —— 13, for *bleſt* read *bright*
—— 112, —— 1, *read thus,*
He ſhakes off the palſey, ſtrikes gout with diſmay,

LETTER I.

Lady D. to Lady S.

Diſtreſs of a fine Lady—Country Relations, &c.

O Dear Lady S,— I pray and beſeech ye,
By the next poſt, if poſſible, ſome comfort teach me,
If, alas, any eaſe, any comfort can reach me!

While you, like captive nun, 'midſt gloomy ſhades,
Sigh for the Court, and pant for maſquerades,
Curſe the clear ſtreams and ſolitary groves,
Since there no more your darling GORGET roves;
While you lament the fate that chains you there,
Far from the bleſt abodes of Groſvenor-Square,

And ſpend the night in ſtudying to be free,
To break your hated bands and fly to me;
I, far more wretched, (can'ſt thou think it true?)
Would quit this ſcene of joy and fly to you.

Yes, the cruel Fates purſue me,
Cruel Fates, that would undo me!
Was't not enough to bid me wed,
To lead me to the marriage bed,
To bind me to a filthy creature,
Worſt of objects form'd by Nature?
When I loſt my firſt dear rover,
I thought the ſpite of Fate was over;
When from the altar I withdrew,
Firmly bound to —— *you know who*,

I vow'd

I vow'd that Fortune ha! in ſtore
No earthly plague to vex me more;
But O! the vile pernicious fury
Still haunts thy poor friend, I aſſure ye;
Where'er I turn the jade is there,
Ill fortune meets me every where!

Can'ſt thou, dear friend, afford relief?——
But firſt divine my cauſe of grief.
What's worſe than ſitting in the boxes
With grocers' wives and oilmen's doxies?
What's worſe than lonely country houſes?
What's worſe than tête à tête with ſpouſes?
Worſe than a puny infant's cries,
Long ſermons, diſmal tragedies?

What's worſe than bells on birth-day ringing?
Worſe than a cough when HARROP's ſinging?
Or lovers dear in duels ſlain;
Or guardians rais'd to life again?
Or rural hops at country fairs;
Or ancient virgins muttering prayers?
What's worſe than ſolemn ſtrains of HANDEL;
Want of money; dearth of ſcandal;
Or jealous huſbands' fond orations?——
What can be worſe—but vile relations!
Relations, ſtirrers up of ſtriſe,
Shame of faſhion! plague of life!

O had I been an orphan left,
Of parents, kindred, friends bereft,

Unknown

Unknown to every mortal here,
Or drop'd from ſome remoter ſphere;
I ne'er had view'd my country couſins
Flock from the North, like Goths, in dozens,
To tinge my cheek with crimſon ſhame,
Diſturb my peace, diſgrace my name!

My dear, thou oft haſt heard the ſtory,
(I always pour'd my griefs before ye)
Of barbarous kinſmen in the North,
Who threaten'd me to ſally forth.
Laſt week the unwelcome letter came,
Theſe horrid tidings to proclaim;
I thought it was ſome billet-doux;
Or friendly verſe, by poſt, from you:

But O! what grief my ſoul oppreſs'd,
When thus I found the note addreſs'd.—
" Dear Coz, I've thought year after year
" 'Midſt London beaus and belles to appear;
" But ſomething has prevented ever
" This my firſt wiſh and prime endeavour,
" Yet ſtill 'tis better late than never.
" Tho' you don't viſit me, 'tis true,
" I ſhall make free and viſit you;
" For ceremony often ends
" In fix'd diſlike and loſs of friends;
" Beſides I'm told 'tis out of faſhion,
" Nay almoſt baniſh'd from the nation.
" I and my ſiſter RUTH propoſe
" With KITTY, whom I call my roſe,

" And

" And nephew GEORGE, to take a trip,
" View London, and your ladyſhip;
" Obſerve what curious faſhions reign,
" And then return to wilds again."

As city miſs, in father's ſhop,
Sees at her feet the 'prentice drop,
Who vows on prancing nag to mount her,
And fly from ſlavery and his counter;
When lo! papa, (fond medling man!)
From parlour iſſues, pale and wan,
Arm'd with his old Militia gun,
To ſtrike with awe his would-be ſon;
The youth avoids the unequal fray,
Miſs trembles, ſcreams, and faints away:

So when the fatal news I read,
From my wan cheek the roſes fled,
I ſhriek'd aloud, I tore my veſt,
And ſunk——upon the MAJOR's breaſt!

Each noon I wak'd with anxious fear——
"What TOILET! are the creatures here?"
Each noiſe I fancy'd their approach,
And trembled at each lumbering coach.

At length they came—why need I tell—
You'll gueſs my grief and ſhame too well!

My fooliſh lord, with ſtrange good nature,
Is civil to each ruſtic creature;

He

He laughs at uncle's clumſy wit,
(Tho' worſe than bon-mots of a cit)
While mercileſs he lays the laſh on
Our modern manners, taſte, and faſhion;
Gives good aunt RUTH the eaſieſt chair,
Rides out with MISS to take the air;
(Indeed I think he'as ſome deſign—
But that is no concern of mine)
And ſhews his couſin GEORGE about,
A handſome, baſhful, aukward lout.

When early morning ſtreaks the ſkies
And I retire to bed—they riſe;
At two the *things* with hunger pine,
(Poor vulgar ſouls that long to dine!)

And cram at paſtry cooks, to wait
With patience for our early eight;
Then view the board with ſigns of grief,
And ſigh for ribs and rounds of beef!—
But O! no more——enough's expreſs'd,
Imagination paint the reſt!

Say, my dear, what muſt I do?
Shall I fly to gloom and you?
To diſtant villa hurry down,
Ere the world forſake the town;
Ere the darling opera's over;
Ere the Major, charming lover!
Forc'd by General's harſh decree,
Flies to camp from joy and me!

But

But tell me, how d'ye waſte your prime?
How do you kill the monſter, Time?
Does dear Sir SIMON ſtill perplex you,
Still with odious fondneſs vex you?
Alas! whene'er the wretch I view,
I drop a friendly tear for you!
What greater torment than to fold
A huſband jealous, fond and old!—

But have you no Militia near you?
No enſigns, pretty things! to chear you?
Or in ſilence do you rove,
Thinking on your abſent love;
And, while he haunts your waking dream,
Adjuſt your head-dreſs by the ſtream?

But ſoft——what thunder ſhakes the door?
O Heaven! I hear my monſters roar;
With open mouths they crave their food,
Like hungry tigers of the wood!
Their jargon's worſe than any Babel——
But hold, the dinner's on the table——
Adieu, my dear, I muſt deſcend;
O pity your unhappy friend!

LUCRETIA D.

——Square, 1780.

LETTER

LETTER II.

Mr. P. to JOHN C. Eſq.

Journey to Town— Lord and Lady D—

AFTER many diſtreſſes and accidents paſt,
We arriv'd at this city of cities at laſt,
Where confuſion and order, where pleaſure and pain,
Where folly and ſenſe, wealth and poverty reign.
Ah JOHN! times and ſeaſons are alter'd, in truth,
Since we *drawl'd* up to town in the days of our youth:
'Twas then a month's journey thro' rough rugged ways,
But now we were *wiſk'd* here in three or four days:
The dogs of poſtilions tore on ſuch a pace,
That I ſwore all the raſcals were running a race:

When

When I bade 'em go ſlow, they replied with a crack
Of their whip on the haunch of unfortunate hack;
I fretted and ſwore, but 'twas ſtill all in vain,
The hard-hearted villains were deaf to my pain;
For the louder we hollow'd, the leſs did they mind us,
And drove as if legions of devils were behind us.

On the ſecond day's journey our RUTH you muſt know,
(She muſt always be prying) had a deviliſh bad blow;
A couple paſs'd by who ſeem'd billing and cooing,
The virgin, who loves the appearance of wooing,
Thruſt her wither'd neck out of the window to ſpy,
But the coach gave a jolt, and ſhe got a black eye.

'Twere tedious to tell all that paſs'd on our way;
We were bad off by night, and ſtill worſe off by day;

Vile

Vile liquors to ſwallow, damp beds to repoſe on;
I was oft forc'd to turn out, and ſleep with my cloathes on,
Rooms that ſtunk of tobacco, tough meat and blunt knives,
Impertinent hoſts and their nimble-tongued wives—
We were worried and teaz'd almoſt out of our lives!
All travellers ſure are deſerving of pity,
For each inn you viſit 's a neſt of banditti,
All wanderers they plunder, tho' no blood they ſpill,
And inſtead of a *piſtol* preſent you a *bill*;
Which weapon, when aim'd at th' unfortunate elf,
Compels him to ſtand and deliver his pelf.—
Were I a knight-errant, like thoſe in romances,
Who roam thro' the world with ſharp ſwords and long lances,

My

My buſineſs ſhould be, as I hope for a bleſſing,
In their own dens to give theſe vile caitiffs a dreſſing.

However at laſt ſafe arriv'd here we are,
The wonder and jeſt of polite ——Square.
Before I proceed to recount where I've been,
What fine things I've heard, and what fine things I've ſeen,
On our modiſh relations I'll give a few ſtrictures,
And, tho' but a dauber, attempt to paint pictures:
And firſt to begin with my fine Lady niece—
(Between you and I ſhe's a very queer piece)
Her mind ſeems compos'd of good metal and baſe,
But as hard to find out as her natural face:
Could you ſee her juſt out of her neſt, you would gueſs
She's a dowdy of forty——perhaps ſomething leſs;

But

But at night, all array'd in her glory (between us)
She'd paſs for a fine ſtriking likeneſs of Venus;
She ſpends all the day her ſweet perſon adorning,
Goes out all the night, and to bed in the morning.
How fatal the day Lady DAUDLE came down,
Grew fond of my ſiſter, and took her to town,
Soon taught her to ſcorn all ſhe learnt in her youth,
And bluſh at the maxims of grandmama RUTH;
Her daughter, inſtructed as fitted her ſtation,
Now ſhews the bleſt fruits of polite education,
Aſſurance, and vanity, pride, affectation!——

Her huſband, my Lord, tho' a fine poliſh'd beau,
Is as worthy a creature as any I know:
He enjoys all the jokes that I careleſsly tell,
And indeed ſeems to like us all wonderful well.—

His ſordſhip, as loads muſt be laid on the great,
Keeps a learned Divine for religion and ſtate,
One Dr. CRINGE-CROUCHER, who good people ſay
Takes an excellent method advice to convey,
Has a monſtrous good wig, and *a fine moving way*.

Would you think in this city, for plenty renown'd,
At this opulent board, where all dainties abound,
That I'm famiſh'd with hunger—but as I'm a ſinner,
When you go to ſupper, we ſit down to dinner!
By retaining the raſcals with fees now and then,
We make ſhift to get at ſome breakfaſt by ten:
Though my lady can't make her appearance ſo ſoon,
She's not ſeen, till, what ruſtics would call, afternoon.
My digeſtion is hurt by the ſweet things I eat,
T' appeaſe my poor ſtomach, which grumbles for meat.

When

When at laſt we get dinner, I'm puzzled to find,
In the midſt of profuſion, one diſh to my mind.
I who nauſeate their ſoups, and their *coutelets Françaiſ*;
Wiſh the cook at the devil, full ten times a day;
Who takes care to ſend nothing wholeſome and good;
But murders and frenchifies all our choice food.

His Lordſhip at length has afforded relief,
And now gives us ſirloins and buttocks of beef:
With triumph I tell you, that I have reſtor'd
Theſe worthies of old to their ſeats at the board;
Who before in ſome corner obſcurely were plac'd;
Poor exiles from table, deſpis'd and diſgrac'd!

I have much more to ſay—but I now think it better
(May be you'll think ſo too) to ha' done with my letter;

If you reliſh my ſtile, and my verſes commend,
Another epiſtle I ſhortly ſhall ſend,
In the mean time I reſt your well-wiſher and friend.

RALPH P———.

P. S.—I had almoſt forgotten Sir ROGER the knight—
Pray preſent him my ſervice, as oft as I write;
Remember me too, to that worthy and wiſe man,
Dr. BLISTER VAN CLISTER; BEN BITE the exciſeman;
To good lawyer RATTRAP, and old juſtice GRUB,
Our punch-loving prieſt, and the reſt of the club.

——Square, 1780.

LETTER

LETTER III.

Miſs RUTH P. to Mrs. SUSAN —— Houſekeeper at ——Hall——

Obſervations on Lady D's. conduct——*Dr.* CRINGECROUCHER——*Charge to Mrs.* SUSAN.

I Am ſorry to ſay it, yet ſay it I muſt,
That all we have heard is, alas! but too juſt!
Yes, SCOLDWELL, my lady, by night and by day,
On the broad wings of vanity 's flying away;
In a word ſhe's heritical——you have more notion
Of routs and ridottos, than ſhe of devotion.

On

On Sundays, forgetful of what is to come,
She publickly has a vile thing call'd a *drum*;
She knows not what Sacrament means, and indeed
I believe ſhe remembers no word of her creed;
Nay ſhe laughs with the Major, deiſtical beaſt!
Who ſwears that the Scriptures were forg'd by a prieſt,
That he might have plenty of fools at command,
And pamper his guts with the fat of the land.
O! think how my rage of devotion muſt riſe——
I could ruſh on the villain and pluck out his eyes;
And to kill ſuch a wretch were a true godly work,
Who has no more faith than a Jew or a Turk.

You'll wonder I did not, quite frozen with horror,
Pack my things up, and fly from this ſecond *Gomorrah*;

But

But indeed, I muſt ſay, I've been able to find
In this ſink of uncleanneſs, one man to my mind:
This perſon ſo happy in my approbation,
Is his Lordſhip's good chaplain—indeed his relation.
O could you but hear him, I'm ſure you would ſay,
You'd not heard ſuch another this many a day.

I think my niece KITTY goes too much abroad,
But who can refuſe ſuch a man as my Lord?
Beſides the good doctor declares, by the by,
His Lord has a worthy old knight in his eye;
A man of ſound faith, and a good clear eſtate,
Who has taken a kind of a liking to KATE;
And he doubts not will ſoon be perſuaded to take her,
And, without any money, a Lady to make her:

As this is the caſe, it is ſure no bad notion,
To get the girl ſettled without any *potion*;
And ſettled ſo well, that her uncle and I,
Need part with no money till both of us die.

You would think too, that GEORGE, who's ſo clever and witty,
Might pick up a girl here, with ſomething that's pretty.
I'm certain my nephew, when all's ſaid and done,
Is worthy the beſt woman under the ſun;
But GEORGE, ſtill in love with our neighbour Miſs C. is,
Tho' here he might meet with a richer than ſhe is;
Beſides he's more baſhful than any young maid is:
They fly *to* the men, but he flies *from* the ladies.

'Tis

'Tis true maiden's forwardneſs always offends one,
Who ſhould wait for a huſband till Providence ſends one;
But I tell him, young men ſhould be always a watching,
To pick up fine flies, that are well worth the catching;
For I'll venture to ſay, I ne'er knew in my life
A baſhful man do himſelf good in a wife.
They 're always outwitted by dancers and ſingers,
And let all the fortunes ſlip clean through their fingers;
Then at laſt all the horrors of wedlock to prove,
Take ſome pretty fac'd huſſy, and marry for love.

Forget not to look in the corner beaufet,
Where you'll find jars and glaſſes all orderly ſet;

In the jars, if I rightly remember, I told ye,
Are damſons and plumbs, which I fear will get mouldy:
Pray put in freſh papers——if they ſhould miſcarry,
It will far more diſtreſs me, than never to marry:
Take care that the ſervants don't get at my jellies;
Such dainties are not for their great vulgar bellies;
And look all about for my family prayers;
I think it was left in the cloſet up ſtairs;
Pray wrap it up ſafe, for that book's worth a mint,
'Tis a true pious work, and an excellent print.

Well now, I believe I muſt bid you good night;
For I don't find I've any thing further to write:
My love to all friends,——and believe me with truth,
Your affectionate miſtreſs and kinſwoman,

RUTH.

——Square, 1780.

LETTER

LETTER IV.

Miſs KITTY R. to Miſs SALLY F.

A faſhionable Day——the Contraſt.

O, my dear, what joys are mine!
Would to Heaven ſuch joys were thine!
MELANCHOLY, far from town,
To lonely manſions hurries down;
See ſhe wings her rapid way
To where tall trees obſcure the day;
Where moats the Gothic wall ſurround,
Where aunts and grandmothers abound.

There

There in robes of crape array'd,
She ſtalks along the gloomy ſhade,
Liſts to the muſic of the rooks,
And pores all night o'er godly books!——
O cloſe the horrid ſcene, and ſee
Joys before unknown to me;
Dear delights that ne'er can pall,
Delights, unknown at ——Hall!

O Goddeſs come! my voice inſpire,
Laughing muſes come along;——
String anew my feeble lyre,
Point my wit and ſmooth my ſong.
But not from PINDAR's antique mountain,
Hallow'd grove, or ſacred fountain,

Not

Not in Grecian robes array'd,
With laurel crowns, that ne'er can fade;
But you, ye ſmiling train, who ſport
'Midſt all the pleaſures of a court;
From gilded domes, illumin'd halls,
From operas, concerts, routs, and balls;
With well-ſhap'd hoops, and well-dreſs'd hair,
Here, in vis à vis repair:
Modiſh muſes, let me ſee
Your ſmiling faces ſmile on me.
No more I wake my harp to tell
The joys of county ball;
What pretty ruſtic bore the bell,
What youth was doom'd to fall.
No longer rural themes inſpire,
DISSIPATION claims my lyre!

Hear

Hear then how I paſs my time,
And own the ſubject worthy rhyme:
At ten, my dear, I rub my eyes——
"BELLA, is it time to riſe?"——
"Yes me'm"——"BELLA, can you tell,
"Have they rung the breakfaſt bell?"——
"Yes Miſs—hark!——again it rings"——
"Well then BELLA, where's my things?"——
Then I riſe in all my pride,
And ſpread the ſattin curtains wide;
While the ſoft down I repoſe on,
Gentle BELLA puts my cloaths on.——
When the ſilver urn is gone,
Cloth remov'd, and breakfaſt done,
Uncle walk'd to take the air,
Aunt to pore on Dr. BLAIR;

Or

Or to con the morning leſſon;——

Then I put my morning dreſs on;

And into the coach I get,

Coach, adorn'd with *coronet!*

Thro' crowded ſtreets we fly like wind,

Leaving plodding ſouls behind,

Gazing on us as we paſs,

More than beaus on looking glaſs.

" Bid the coachman drive us on,

" To faſhionable PARTINGTON——

" Pull the ſtring, BELL——'tis the ſtreet——

" Here the Ducheſs we ſhall meet;

" Here we'll mount in magic chair,

" To imbibe electric air."——

What

What makes the Ducheſs ſtill ſo pretty,
Still ſo airy, gay, and witty?
'Tis th' electric ſpark, they ſay,
Sets her going for the day;
Gives her that enchanting grace,
Points her wit, and ſmooths her face.——
O! ſends me this ætherial fire,
Which more than PHOEBUS can inſpire;
Which thought and anxious care deſtroys,
And re-illumes the ſoul with joys;
Joys elating, dear delights!
Bliſsful days, and bliſsful nights!

" But come, to CHRISTIE's, make haſte JOHN—
" All the bargains will be gone;

" Lord

" Lord, my hair's down !—can I go ſo

" Tumbled, among virtuoſo ?

" Well, I vow no creature's here !——

" Come then let's be gone, my dear."

To the city now we fly,

To teaze the Cits—perhaps to buy——

" But what's o'clock—pray how are you ?

" Is my watch right ?——'tis almoſt two !

" At EXHIBITION we would drop in,

" But we have no time for ſtopping.

Now to HIDE PARK I am gone,

Feather'd hat and habit on ;

High in phaetonic pride,

With his Lordſhip by my ſide :

See he drives the pretty ponies
Thro' bowing ranks of macaronies;
All on well-bred horſes prancing,
Capering, friſking, rearing, dancing,
Who ſalute us while we fly,
As the guards his MAJESTY.
Now the reins are held by JOHN
While we 'light at KENSINGTON;
Soon we join my Lady BAB,
And hear the news from BILLY BLAB:
For already, as you ſee,
All the world are known to me:—
This I owe, upon my word,
To the friendſhip of my Lord,
Who kindly ſhews me all about,
From drum to drum, from rout to rout,

Where

Where all ranks on ſtrangers ſmile,
Introduc'd by men of *ſtyle*.
'Mong common people, friendſhips grow
Like ſickly herbs in froſt and ſnow;
But with the *Great*, aloft they tower
Like hot-houſe plants in half an hour;
For after a few moment's prate,
With all the *Ton* you're intimate.

" But come, my Lord, we muſt away,
" Or I ſhan't get dreſs'd to day."
" Lovely nymph, a ſlave to you,
" *Me voici toujours tout à vous!*

My head complete, my dreſſer gone,
My hoop, my robe, and jewels on,

Down the ſtairs I trip to dine——
French the food, and French the wine:
Then when Lady D—— friſks out,
In cloſe ſedan, to Lady BRISK's rout,
My Lord commands the modern car,
To bear us all to RANELAGH.
(By modern car, my dear, I mean
The chariot gay, or proud Berlin.)
At twelve, or one, again we fly
To play a pool with Lady Di;
Or at dear PANTHEON call,
To view the heart-bewitching ball;
And, if we've a mind to prance,
Juſt run down a country dance:
Then, my dear, at four or five,
Home to —— Square we drive.

Another

Another hour is ſpent in chat,
On love, and—— Lord, I don't know what!——
At length I bid my Lord good bye——
(O that my Lady would but die!)
Free me from my rich array,
And thus conclude the happy day!——

Such is the charming life I lead,
You'll echo "charming life indeed!"
How different that which late I led,
When at ſeven I left my bed;
Unwilling left it, at the call
Of early bell, in cold damp hall,
Cut by the blaſts from winding ſtairs,
To hear my granny muttering prayers:

After breakfaſt forc'd to look
In ſome dull religious book,
Read, till ſpent for want of breath,
Dreadful DRELINCOURT *on Death*;
Doom'd to hear with many a ſigh
Lectures on morality;
Children's duty towards relations,
Till I almoſt loſt all patience!
Laſtly, to complete my trimming,
FORDYCE' ſermons to young women!
Then old aunty takes her turn,
In matters of no leſs concern,
Runs o'er all her choice receipts
To teach me how to ſeaſon meats.
At eve perhaps I ſtrol'd to you,
The only comfort that I knew;

Then

Then while arm in arm we rove,
We tell the progreſs of our love.
I go on but at a poor rate
Ogling with our baſhful curate,
You proudly tell me, you aſpire
To warm the frozen heart of Squire ——.
At night I read Sir CHARLES by ſtealth,
(Dear book! worth a miſer's wealth!)
Or o'er CLARISSA pore till three,
When I can no longer ſee;
Then all the night warm fancy roves
On tyrant friends and ſecret loves!

You'll wonder much, my dear, no doubt,
I'm ſuffer'd thus to gad about:

Sometimes

Sometimes, indeed, I'm forc'd to ſtay
At home with them, and loſe a day,
To let the creatures have their way.
But oft, when aunty cries, in ſpite,
" Kitty, ſtay at home to night;"
And uncle's ſorry I go out ſo,
And wonders I can love a rout ſo;
His Lordſhip anſwers, bending low,
(Indeed he makes a charming bow!)
" Deareſt aunt, your lovely niece
" Muſt hear GIARDINI's favourite piece;
" Sure in me you may confide——
" I muſt not, cannot be deny'd."
Then he ſoftly ſlides up to her,
You'd ſwear his Lordſhip meant to woe her,

And by ſcripture texts, brings her to
Own, that diſſipation's virtue;
Then to uncle pleads for me,
With all-ſeducing flattery:
The good man, graſping his ſoft hand,
Swears all ſhall be at his command.

But now I muſt have done my dear:
BELLA tells me FRISE's here,
Who with FRISE can compare?
Sweeteſt man!—for dreſſing hair!

Lov'd nymph, farewel!——but O believe,
Midſt all my joys, for thee I grieve;
To thy lone walks my fancy flies,
And even at concerts KITTY ſighs!

——Square, 1780. CATHARINE R.

LETTER

LETTER V.

Mr. RALPH P— to To JOHN C——, Eſq.

Miſs Ruth and the Doctor——The Theatre——A Lady of Faſhion.

WELL, now I am got here, faith here I muſt ſtay,
For I find there's no dragging my people away,
I ſeldom ſee KITTY, ſhe's always abroad,
At operas and routs with our good-natur'd lord;
But I think ſhe'll ne'er learn quite ſo much of the mode,
As to ſlight her old friends and her rural abode.
GEORGE is rambling about to ſee buildings all day,
And at night now and then he drops in at the play.

My

My dear ſiſter RUTH that good teazing old creature,
With perhaps a good heart, but the worſt face in nature,
To Dr. CRINGE CROUCHER is always declaring
Her rooted abhorrence of wenching and ſwearing;
And laments to the parſon, with tears in her eyes,
That churches fall down, and conventicles riſe.
The Doctor looks grave, ſtrokes his cheek and his band,
Puts his wig in good order, and preſſes her hand,
And tells her the church ſurely never can fall,
But ſhall rear her bright head up in ſpite of 'em all;
Beſides, the good prieſt other learning can ſhow,
And teach what, I fear, ſhe's as anxious to know.
When they've ſettled their creed, on good victuals he's
treating;
For the Doctor has true underſtanding—in eating:
"This faith, Madam, ſtrengthens us all that is good in—
"But d'ye know how to make the moſt excellent pudding?

Indeed

" Indeed ſuch a treaſure you ſeldom will meet!——
" A late learned Alderman gave the receipt;
" And to you I'll impart it, for really I find
" You've an excellent taſte, and a true pious mind."

But think not, with ſceptical malice and pride,
The church, or the clergy, I mean to deride;
Religion I honour, the church I approve,
The gown I reſpect, and true virtue I love;
But bigots, who ſure to religion moſt hurt do,
With *ſound faith*, a fine ſuccedaneum for virtue!
And hypocrites all in falſe colours array'd,
Who *deal in* good works, whoſe religion's *a trade*,
I hate and abhor; and to ſcourge them I'll venture,
Whether Papiſt, or Churchman, or ſturdy Diſſenter.

Laſt

Laſt night I attended my nephew, my niece,
And my lord to the Playhouſe to ſee a new piece;
Tho' I knew 'twould be nothing to me who had ſeen
Booth, Oldfield, and Woffington, Cibber and Quin;

A confident actor firſt came on the ſtage,
Who ſeem'd all the night in a wonderful rage,
He roar'd out ſo loud, ſo diſtorted each feature,
He forgot 'twas his buſineſs to imitate nature:
Some vented their griefs in a low muttering voice;
Then, all on a ſudden, quite ſtunn'd me with noiſe;
Loud plaudits inform'd me that this was thought fine,
Nay the ladies around me declar'd 'twas divine;
O Lord, cries Miſs *Fig*, how enchantingly clever,
As I hope to be ſav'd he is greater than ever!

I thought

I thought, what with clapping and thumping of canes,
They'd have had an old houſe on their heads for their
pains,
By their looks, words and actions, I dare to engage,
That they were as mad as the chiefs of the ſtage:
'Tis a maxim obſerv'd by ſome players, I find,
That a hero diſtreſs'd ſhould be out of his mind;
And indeed, who can blame them, ſince all the world
ſay,
The more frantic their geſtures, the better they play.

What a contraſt appear'd!—with what eaſe did ſhe
move,
Majeſtic as JUNO, and graceful as LOVE!
Each action ſo juſt, ſo expreſſive each feature,
It was not thought *acting*,—'twas too much like nature,

Now

Now her voice, ſweet and plaintive, enchanted my ear,
Now melted with ſoftneſs, now chill'd me with fear:
I was charm'd and delighted I own beyond meaſure—
But ſtill 'twas not *acting*, and gave no great pleaſure;
For nature I find with the critical band,
Is a thing they're unus'd to, and don't underſtand—
To his lordſhip I ventur'd my feelings to tell,
Who reply'd—— "*ſhe falls off, but ſhe's ſtill very well.*

O hear! ye, that wiſh to be judges of merit!
True feeling is tameneſs, and fury is ſpirit!—
More bleſs'd is the actor with excellent lungs,
Than with honey that flows from ſeraphical tongues;
He is ſure to ſucceed, who's reſtrain'd by no bound,
Who ſtares, raves, and ſtamps, and falls well on the ground;

Hear ſons of the ſtage! be this ever your plan,
Reſemble the *puppet*, but think not of *man*.

And now while I ponder'd theſe things in my mind,
I was rouz'd by a loud tattling noiſe from behind;
I turn'd to my lord to aſk what was the matter,
Who told me 'twas only young lady CLACKCLATTER:
As ſhe enter'd the box—"O my dear, how you bore us!
"So!—according to cuſtom the creature's before us!
"Lord, my Lord! I can't think how you got here ſo ſoon!—
"One would think that your lordſhip eat dinner at noon!"—
"O m'am, check that horrid idea I pray—
"No, I always contrive to dine after the play:—

"But

" But where were you laſt night, you dear little
rover, ——"
" I ſought for your ladyſhip all the town over;
" By your ſmiles, which I prize more than miſers
their treaſure"——
" O, my lord, at the opera expiring with pleaſure——
" That Italian's a dear little wonderful thing!
" O that ſeraph!——pray when does the fifth act
——" begin?
" How d'ye kill time this evening?——you can't ſtay
" here long——
" For a play is as bad as an old-faſhion'd ſong."——
" Did you hear what's become of Miſs PRISCY PAM-
" PRINNER,
" She has not been heard of ſince yeſterday dinner—
" To be ſure there are charms in Sr. TOBY O'GRIN-
" NER!——

" But the world lies ſo faſt——bring ſome freſh le-
" monade."——

Does your ladyſhip go to the next maſquerade?—
Do I live! do I breathe!——O I heard it for cer-
tain,
That Sir JOHN——O! at laſt ſee they draw up the
curtain.——
What is it to night? muſt we ſimper or cry?
Lord this place is ſo hot that I'm ready to die.——
What people ſurround us! I vow and declare,
One may almoſt as well be at BARTHOL'MEW fair.
My Lord! Lady CHARLOTTE!——Come, let's diſ-
appear;
Though the houſe is quite full, yet there's *nobody*
here!——

And

And the Devil go with you, in ſecret I cried,

And with all ſons and daughters of faſhion and pride!

RALPH P——.

——Square, 1780.

LETTER VI.

BRIDGET the Houſe-maid to HESTER the Dairy-maid.

A panegyric on High Life.

LARD HESTER, in al yare born daies ye never ſau
ſuch a fine place,
You'd give yare eres and ſom'ut to bute, my gall, to be
in my caſe—
As I hop to be ſavd it betes al the fin ſites I ever com
a neer.——
Wy tis fare dai here it ſems evry da in the yere.—

I've

Ive got ſuch a dele of nues to tel ye that I'm reddy to buſt——

Yit there's ſuch a mort of things in my minde, I dont know which to ſa furſt——

Ah wench, I've got a ſite of ſwete arts!——in our unkid place.

Wun can hardly git a man for luve or munny to luk in wun's face.

You may tell ROBIN to luck for a ſwete hart els ware,
For I wont have nothing to ſa to ſuch a pore pokin creture I ſware.

I feck's al the cuntry fellers arnt wurth an olde ſong,
But here thay are hugging and kiſſing us al the da longe——

And ſuch ſmart fellers tu, none of yare lo lifed jacks,
But gentilmen futmen with poder afe wa down thare backs;——

Thay're

Thay're finer every da, than our top ſquir any wun
day;——
For thay're dreſſt al the weke as thof evry day wos
Sunday.—
Thare's my Lord's *Vally de Shamper*, who wares grate
huge tales,
He's a vaſt clever man, and has ruffells down to his nails.
He tels me that he's *toute a vouſe*, which is as much as
to ſa,
That he'll luve me all the nite as well as al the da,
And that I have a *bone vizauge*, and a *bone cure*,
Which mens that I have a very handſum face to be
ſure.——
And thare's JOHN the footman, who's a great genus,
and alwaies tellin
(For he makes varſes) that I'm for all the world like
one MRS. HELLIN;

Now

Now ho ſhe ſhud be I dont werry well no,
But fancy a woman of gud fortun a grate many yeres ago.
The ladis, for there all ladis here tho no better than me
or you.
(Lord come up to LUNON, gall, and be a lady tou.)
I ſay the ladies are all very civile and ſa,
I ſhall ſone be wone of the *ho munde* as well as they.—
Wen we get al togeder, you cant think howe merry we
al be,——
For thare's no old woman ater them, as thare wos ater
you and me.
I can't think wot biſsniſs my old miſtuſs had to be
poking hur head
Into evry corner——for my part I wiſs al ſuch miſ-
terſis wos ded.——
And beſides we ete and drink wotever we have a minde,
All manner of nice ſweet things, and fine outlandiſh
winde.—— Such

Such as our maſter has but vonce a year when he tretes,

The nite and barrownite with venſun and other ſtinking metes.——

Whi thares the cochman was telling us tother nite al the 'fares of ſtate.——

He noes every bit of al that's going on among the grate.——

You can't geſs wot a mort of fine ladies CHARLES has had——

I couldint have thot that fine ladies wos ſo bad!——

But they tells me that vartu is like a old faſhon gound

Which is int fit to be worne by any bodde in this fine tound.——

It's wery wel for thos that be as ugly as a toade——

For ſartaine I alwaies thot it was a very cumberſum lode:

O Wench!

O wench!—I've larn'd ſuch a ſecret—that for anny munny I would'int ſell!——

But will you promiſe upon your liffe and ſole never to telle.——

Lard, my old miſterſ'is bel rings——I muſt go up ſtares,

I dare be ſorne to rede ſum of her olde fuſty prares.

When ſhe has pord her ies out, then I muſt cum

To rede here goud for nothing bucks——I wiſh I was dum!

Wen my friends had me taute, they thot themſelves ſo wis and diſcarning,

But I wis they wos furder for tetching me ſo much larning.

Well goud by, my gall, cume oup to LUNNUN, for that's yare ſort,

And you'l ſune git a place amung the ga fokes at cort—

For

For my part, til I git you wid us I ſhaull be quite in a fidgit——

And ſo no more at preſent frome youre frend tel deth,

BRIDGIT.

——Squar, 1780.

LETTER

LETTER VII.

Mr. RALPH P— to To JOHN C——, Esq.

A CONVERSATIONE.

MY Lord, t'other evening when din ner was done,
And bottles and glasses, and fruit, were set on,
Said, he'd just got a card from my Lady CHATTONNY,
Who beg'd him to come to her *Conversatione*:
Go with me, he cried, and I'll promise a treat;
There the gay, and the grave, and the learned will meet:
There men of all tastes, and all humours you'll find,
And may join in the party that's most to your mind.

I was

I was pleas'd with this thing, I ne'er heard of before,
So his Lordſhip commanded the coach to the door:
Away then they drove us, but when we got there,
The room was ſo full we could ſcarce find a chair:
KATE got to the ſopha, by young lady HORNER,
Whom ſhe'd ſeen at my Lord's——GEORGE pop'd down in a corner.

For my part, poor mortal! I ſat down behind,
'Twixt the window and door, in a current of wind;
That I'm quite hoarſe this morning, you need not be told,
You know thorough air always gives me a cold.

Then the coffee and tea
Were pour'd out d'ye ſee,

In

In the parlour below by the livery'd 'ſquire;

And indeed I muſt own,

Tho' cold as a ſtone,

As ſtrong and as bitter as heart could deſire.

When they'd handed about

To all the gay rout,

Two cups of the liquor which ladies adore;

Quickly out of our ſight,

It aſtoniſh'd me quite,

The cake and the coffee, and tea things they bore,

Without aſking us once if we choſe any more.

Then they got into parties, as ſuited them beſt,

Each ſet by themſelves, turn'd their backs on the reſt:

To be ſure ſuch gay people knew well what was right,

But I ſhould have thought it not quite ſo polite.

Firſt I ſat by a cluſter of beauties and beaus,

" Who talk'd of fine ponies, fine women, fine cloathes;

" Lord! my lovely Miſs WAGTAIL" ſays, pretty beau BRISKER

" I've juſt ſeen your dear friend Miſs FANNY FAN-

" FRISKER."

" —Sweet creature!——ſhe's truly what all men

" adore ſo."——

" —Faith not quite ſo charming but ſome I know

" more ſo."——

" —You difficult thing! you're as rude as a bear,

" You think nobody handſome I vow and declare!

" What fault can you find?——to be ſure her hair's

" ſandy,

" And TATTLE proteſts that her legs are quite

" bandy."

" —O,"

" —O," cries Captain O'Tatter, " They tell me,
" my dear,
" That ſwate crature has got near three thouſand a year."
" —No ſuch thing my dear Captain—d'ye know Miſs
" Brocade;
" What a ſweet thing ſhe'd on at the laſt maſque-
" rade!"
" —What was't?"—" Quite a heavenly ſattin I
" vow,
" All embroider'd with thinghums, I can't tell you
" how."—

You may gueſs that I ſoon turn'd away in a paſſion,
Quite ſick of theſe maſters and miſſes of faſhion;
And got by a nymph, with a white varniſh'd face,
And a ſallow thin man almoſt covered with lace.

" —Did

" —Did you hear the laſt ſong?——by CECILIA,
" ſwear
" The bliſs was too great for my weak nerves to bear;
" I was rapt all the time in a trance of delight!——
" But, CROTCHIT, was you at the opera laſt night?—
" *Sans doute*——Do 'tis certain de opera fall off.——
" —They tell me SESTINI has got a ſad cough?—
" —*Mon Dieu!* wid dis vile foggy air all about vone
" *Les Italiens*, dear Madame, are never vithout vone."
" When's what's his name's concert?—I always go
" there.——
" But ſure they're all buried at Hanover-ſquare."
" No Madame I hear dat divine QUAVEROLO
" Will give us next week a celeſtial *ſolo*.——
" If I crawl on vone leg, I'll be dere."——" So will I:—
" At *concertos* I'm rapt—but at *ſolos* I die."

" Pray

But ſoon from theſe vot'ries of muſic I ran,
And plac'd myſelf cloſe by a parliament man:
" Pray, my Lord, was your Lordſhip at laſt night's
" debate?——
" I was told that the houſe ſat exceedingly late:
" What d'ye think of the Premier?——They ſay he
" muſt fall.——
" What was done?"——" Why as uſual—juſt no-
" thing at all!——
" Mr.—what's his name—labour'd two hours to prove,
" That money's a thing which all miniſters love;
" And ſhew'd, by quotations of Latin and Greek,
" That adminiſtration was wicked and weak.
" By his friend too, (you know who I mean) we were
" taught
" In a few years the nation would ſcarce have a groat."

" But my Lord, ſure they notic'd this virulent chat-
" ter;
" What did miniſters anſwer?"—" Why faith no
" great matter——
" Theſe people, you know, have the rage of debate;
" They're contented enough if they're ſuffer'd to
" prate:
" So we let 'em talk nonſenſe——but when we di-
" vide,
" You need not be told that the laugh's on our ſide."

Next a party of critics and authors I join'd,
And thought I had found out a ſet to my mind:
Cries a little black man, " I'm convinc'd, Dr. GUZZLE,
" 'Tis a poor paltry book that's juſt wrote by one
" PUZZLE.

I'm

" I'm told too that RATSBANE and SCRRACHOWL
" abuſe it———
" Have you, my dear Doctor, had time to peruſe
" it?"
" O, yes, I've juſt ſkim'd it—'tis terrible traſh,
" An *oleo* of nonſenſe, an ill-ſavour'd *haſh*."
" Sir, good Mr. SHUTTLECOCK's pamphlet (depend
" on't)
" Which he's going to publiſh, will ſoon make an end
" on't.———
" I heard," cries another, at CADELL's, to day,
" That JOHNSON's in town, and is writing away;
" I was charm'd with his MILTON; what judgment
" and ſpirit!
" Mr. REGICIDE, ſure you'll allow this has merit?

" You've read it, no doubt, Sir,"—" Not I, Sir,
" indeed———
" Read JOHNSON!——I'd ſooner ſubſcribe to the
" creed!———
" His opinions, religious and civil, I hate——
" Sir, he'd make us all ſlaves to the church and the
" ſtate!——
" Gud Sir," cries a Scot, ſpringing up from be-
hind,
And preſenting his ſnuff-box, " you're quite o'my
" mind;
" Tho' the doctor would fain give all poets the law,
" O' the ſpirit of verſe he knows nothing at a'.
" In ſpite of his critique, I canna' perceive,
" What there is in your poem of ADAM and EVE;

" An

" An you read OSSIAN, MILTON canna' ga doun,
" 'Tis lik after a virgin a meſs o' the town:
" On this ſubject the Doctor does nothing but dream,
" For he is too purblind to ken the ſublime."——

Enrag'd with the Scot and republican ſpirit,
Diſguſted I turn'd from ſuch judges of merit:
And laſt I approach'd a gay rattling young Lord,
Who ſeem'd by his talk juſt arriv'd from abroad;
While the peer was recounting the wonders he ſaw,
The reſt only anſwer'd with *hum!* or with *ha!*
At laſt we were told ('tis a bouncer I ſwear)
Of a cucumber, growing—— I can't tell you where—
Which was more than four porters to carry were able,
Two and thirty yards long, all coil'd up like a cable.

I burſt

I burſt out a laughing——the peer with a bow,
Beg'd I'd walk with him down to the parlour below;
I obey'd, wond'ring ſtill what his buſineſs could be,
When ſhutting the door, turning briſkly to me;
" As incredulous people are too apt to flout me,
" I carry theſe piſtols, my beſt proofs, about me:
" Pray do me the favour—which ever you chuſe——
" I'll warrant them good, for thy're always in uſe——
" But we may diſturb the good folks——'tis not
" dark,——
" I think we had better juſt ſtep to *Hyde-Park.*"——
In vain I aſk'd pardon till quite out of breath,
The blood-thirſty villain was bent on my death;
Spite of all I could do, ſpite of all I could ſay,
He politely perſiſted to ſhew me the way:

But

But while I'd have giv'n my life for a farthing,
My Lord had occaſion to viſit the garden:
On hearing the buſtle, he ſtept in to ſee——
And came juſt in time for unfortunate me!
He aſk'd my opponent the cauſe of this clatter,
And after they'd had but a few moment's chatter,
My ſpark ſaid, my Lord had explain'd the whole matter:
For his part, he'd quite miſconciev'd the affair;
And hop'd he ſhould ſee me at CAVENDISH-Square.
Then he open'd the door——beg'd I'd walk up the ſtairs,
And he'd give a deſcription of NEWFOUNDLAND bears.
I anſwer'd—I thought it was time to retire:
So, leaving my niece to the care of her ſquire,

And making low bows to the braye macaroni,
I trudg'd home, quite sick of a CONVERSATIONE.

RALPH P——,

——Square, 1780.

LETTER

LETTER VIII.

Mr. GEORGE R. to Mr. CHARLES C.

Some very trite obſervations—misfortunes of a baſhful man.——

WHAT folly, dear CHARLES, marks this changeable ſcene!

This reflection has ſtruck me wherever I've been:
Our own native talents behind us are thrown,
Unthought of, uncultur'd, and almoſt unknown;
Each ſtrives againſt nature to rival his brother,
And graſps at the graces poſſeſs'd by another.

He

He whoſe perſon's deform'd, no entreaties can bind
To ſtudy the graces and gifts of the mind;
He be-ſpangles his coat, and be-powders his hair,
Bows, dances, and ogles, the ſlave of the fair:

He, whom Nature meant only to ſhine at a court,
Is anxious on PINDUS' rich mountain to ſport:
He flies from the belles, who would hear with delight,
And in vain woes the muſes by day and by night.

Examples ſhould prove your aſſertions, they ſay,
Here examples are ſeen almoſt every day.
Miſs PEACOCK, with face and with figure divine,
Slights beauty, but fain as a ſinger would ſhine;
But miſs, with hoarſe voice and no knowledge of muſick,
Warbles ſo all the day, that ſhe makes not a few ſick.

Miſs

Miſs PATTYPAN, famous for pudding and pies,
The kitchen forſakes, and to drawing rooms flies.
Young PINDUS they ſay is an excellent poet,
Tho' by all that he publiſhes no one would know it;
He thinks that his talent is proſe, and indeed,
Prints nothing but tracts which no creature can read.

Shall I too, forgetful of reaſon's command,
Make one of this blind, this ridiculous band?
Deſign'd in ſome lonely retirement to rove,
My company, books, ſome fair wood-nymph, my love,
Shall I in rich habit my aukwardneſs ſhew,
The ſcorn of the beauty, the ſcoff of the beau;
Be foremoſt to enter bleſt pleaſure's abode,
And commence, ſpite of nature, a man of the mode?

O CHARLES, tho' aſham'd and quite vex'd in my heart,
I'm compell'd to perform this ridiculous part;
They drag me abroad 'mong the gay, the polite,
Make me dreſs all the day, make me viſit all night.
With thy dear lovely ſiſter delighted I rove,
And aw'd by no terrors, talk freely of love;
But ſurrounded by beaus, and addreſs'd by the fair,
What words, my dear friend, can my feelings declare?
I ſtand like a criminal waiting his doom,
And would give what I'm worth to be out of the room.
I tremble with ſhame, while with laughter they ſhake,
The diverſion of fools, like a beaſt at a wake.

Since

Since I've been in this town, I may venture to ſay,
More miſchief I've done than I e'er can repay:
If ever I come where a modiſh young maid is,
And am forc'd, 'gainſt my will, to ſit down by the ladies,
My unfortunate buckle ſome new diſtreſs cauſes,
Their muſlin it rends, or diſfigures their gauzes:
More crockery I break, though no evil deſigner,
Than a monkey let looſe in a cloſet of China.
At old Lady LOVE-PUPPY's tea-room laſt night,
I put all the gueſts in a terrible fright:
She beg'd me to ring the bell, quite in a hurry;
I roſe from my chair in a violent flurry;
The taſſel I pull'd, and contriv'd to bring down
One of WEDGWOOD's antiques that coſt many a crown;

Three

Three ſteps I ran backward, quite ſtruck with diſmay;
The unfortunate tea table ſtood in my way;
(Alas had I known!——but man cannot foreſee things)
Loud ſcream'd all the ladies——loud rattled the tea things.——
The cream-jug was thrown in the lap of Miſs GREASER,
And down went the urn on unfortunate CÆSAR!
Ah CÆSAR, why didſt thou not fly from the urn?
Or didſt thou not know that hot water would burn?
Nymphs drew out their 'kerchiefs, and wip'd their fine cloaths,
The ſlaughter'd remains were pick'd up by the beaus:
While poor Lady LOVEPUPPY drop'd on her knee,
Now ſquinted at CÆSAR, now ſquinted at me;

Then

Then hug'd the poor creature, and ſob'd out ſome
prayers——
Struck dumb with confuſion, I ruſh'd down the ſtairs,
And flying, while they were too buſy to mind me,
Left my gold headed cane and my new hat behind me.

GEORGE R.

——Square, 1780.

LETTER

LETTER IX.

Mr. RALPH P— to To JOHN C——, Esq.

The power of the Fair——Examples Antient and Modern.——

YOU will wonder, my friend, why I ſtay here ſo long,
Since complaining and grumbling's the chief of my ſong:
But woman, dear woman, man's ſweet pretty plaything,
That haughty, that humble, that gloomy, that gay thing;

O'e

O'er me, ſorcereſs like, waves her magical wand,
And compells me to yield to her ſtubborn command:
I, who ne'er by a ſpouſe meek obedience was taught,
I, who ne'er in the rat-trap of wedlock was caught,
Ne'er ſwallow'd that ſtrong dram of comfort, a wife,
Which warms us at firſt, but ſoon preys upon life,
Am teaz'd and tormented with female caprice,
An old maiden ſiſter, and young maiden niece.

The headſtrong young minx puts me quite in a paſſion,
She's juſt like a mule, or a lady of faſhion;
She has got ſuch ridiculous whims in her head——
I wiſh to my heart ſhe was married—or dead.

And yet the young toad's not ſo bad as the old one,
When I talk of our home, ſhe does nothing but ſcold one;
In vain I declare that her niece will be ſpoil'd here,
Her whiteneſs, ſhe ſays, will not even be ſoil'd here.
My ſiſter is one of the tribe of match-makers;
Tho' old maids, in gen'ral, are rather match-breakers.
Ever ſince ſhe's been here in the way of the great,
She's been peering about for a huſband for KATE;
Now ſhe's baiting the hook for a wealthy old knight,
But I'll lay two to one it proves only a *bite*.

Thus you ſee, my dear friend, 'gainſt my will I am ſtay'd
By the obſtinate ſchemes of a fooliſh old maid:

RUTH

RUTH, you know, has been ever the plague of my life——

An old maiden ſiſter's as bad as a wife!

Perhaps you will laugh at my weakneſs, and wonder

That I to a woman will deign to knock under:

But look round the world, and you'll ſoon find that no man

Is free from the rod of tyrannical woman:

In each ſeaſon of life, the ſtill-governing laſſes,

Or lead us like like infants, or drive us like aſſes.

ALEXANDER the mighty,

Who whole days would fight ye,

Was a dupe to a wench, I and you know;
Miſs THAIS ſoon grew
As errant a ſhrew,
As JOVE's prying rib Madam JUNO:

To burn and deſtroy
She led the mad boy,
With a torch in her hand like a bullying HECTOR;
And I'll venture my head,
Each night in her bed,
She ſtunn'd his poor ears with a loud curtain lecture.

You've oft heard, I warrant,
Of th' oſtler-like giant,

Who broke in mad horſes, and clean'd out a ſtable;
Her hand his own club in,
Miſs gave him a drubbing,
When the poor man to ſpin quite ſo faſt was not able.

Why need I run over
That fam'd philoſopher,
Who was turn'd out of doors by his *ſpoſa* they ſay?
I ſhall never find time,
And ſtill leſs find rhyme,
To repeat every inſtance of petticoat ſway.

Depend on't, all great men of whom we have read,
Had wives or had miſſes who well comb'd their head.

'Tis

'Tis juſt ſo with us; for in this we may ſee
The antients and moderns exactly agree:
There's General SCARECROW, juſt come from the wars,
With his purſe full of gold, and his face full of ſcars;
He ſwears they were got in the red field of Fame,
But his ſervants declare by the claws of his dame.
Sir TOBY's oblig'd with his fat ſpouſe to roam
To th' opera, t' avoid rougher muſic at home;
There he dreams he's in counting-houſe weighing his money,
'Till rouz'd from his ſleep by a pinch from his honey.
Good Dr. DOOLITTLE his cleanly wife forces
To an old ſcrubby garret, to pen his diſcourſes;
She declares with his ink he has ſpoil'd her nice floor,
And vows ſhe'll put up with ſuch doings no more.

The ſoft Earl of DEWDROP, unfortunate Lord!
Has not made his appearance theſe three nights abroad;
His darling Signora, by fury miſ-led,
Drew her ſciſſars and cut off three curls from his head;
So the poor macaroni muſt keep within door,
'Till Monſieur the frizeur has made him three more.

But at length to conclude,—with all women you ſee,
As it was in beginning, is now, and ſhall be.

RALPH P——

——Square, 1780.

LETTER

LETTER X.

Mr. GEORGE R. to Miſs MARIA C.

A Love Epiſtle—quite obſolete, and monſtrous low.

NO, dear MARIA, all my ſoul is thine——
Can modiſh beauty ſhew a charm for me?
Can I bow down at pleaſure's gilded ſhrine?
And ceaſe, one moment ceaſe, to think on thee?

Ah no ſweet maid!—my ſoul's far deareſt part!
The flame imbib'd ev'n with my earlieſt breath,
That flame, ſhall never ceaſe to warm my heart
'Till ſtifled by the clay-cold hand of death.

Amid

Amid theſe ſcenes of pomp that court in vain,
Thy lovely image every thought employs;
I curſe the tedious hours, 'till once again
Theſe arms ſhall claſp the ſum of all my joys!

Ye powers! can aught ſurpaſs this vaſt delight?
Ah no! 'tis far beyond all mortal bliſs,
On thy dear charms to feaſt my raviſh'd ſight,
On thy dear lips to print the tender kiſs!

And bluſh not at the thought, enchanting maid,
Bluſh not to meet me thus; let impious love
Start at the ſoft embrace, and ſhame upbraid
The cheek of thoſe whom guilty wiſhes move:

But

But love, like mine, ne'er cheriſh'd baſe deſire,
Ne'er form'd a thought that innocence could fear,
That liſtening ſeraphs might not well inſpire,
And purity like thine approving hear.

Let FASHION's children from their lover's view
With watchful care the toilet's ſtores conceal,
Whoſe magic powers MEDEA's arts renew,
And bid old age the bloom of youth reveal.

Thou ne'er haſt known the labour they beſtow,
Each morn to wake thoſe charms which fade with night,
When rouge muſt teach the pallid cheek to glow,
And waſhes give the boſom's dazzling white.

Thy

Thy flowing locks no cruel arts diſguiſe,
Thy ruby lips no borrow'd fragrance ſhed;
With native charms each morn beholds thee riſe,
Like new-born VENUS from her watery bed.

Far from the buſy world, we'll taſte the ſweets
Which liberal NATURE from her boſom pours;
While the gay crowd, in DISSIPATION's ſeats,
Toil after pleaſure thro' the midnight hours.

They ne'er have ſeen the radiant God of day
Peep thro' the gold-fring'd curtains of the Eaſt;
They ne'er the beauties of the field ſurvey
When MORN has cloath'd them in her dewy veſt.

While

While reſtleſs PRIDE awakens vaſt deſires,
They ne'er the charms of modeſt worth behold;
The thirſt of praiſe or thirſt of pomp inſpires,
The dupes of flatt'ry, or the ſlaves of gold.

Thou know'ſt the bleſſings of an humble mind,
Free from each giddy thought, each wild deſire,
Which no baſe chains of intereſt could bind,
No proſtrate fops with vanity inſpire:

While in their breaſts diſguſt and ſpleen increaſe,
Diſguſt, which Affluence of her joys beguiles;
CONTENT ſhall lead thee thro' the ſhades of PEACE,
CONTENT, who cloathes ev'n Penury in ſmiles.

Think

Think while to thee, my beauteous ſaint, I bend,
I pay that homage angels muſt approve;
For while I gaze, my thanks to Heaven aſcend,
That gave an earthly cherub for my love!

Hence mad AMBITION! I thy flights diſdain;
Hence every good that FORTUNE can impart;
Let vulgar minds o'er ſubject nations reign,
I'll fix my empire in MARIA's heart:

There will I ſway, and pity earthly kings,
Tho' nurs'd in FLATTERY's lap, beſet with fears;
FANCY in arms the murmuring rebel brings,
The venom'd cup diſplays, the poniard rears:

My

While

My little realm conceals no ſecret foe,

No murmuring rebel wakes to war's alarms,

No lurking traitor aims the deadly blow,

LOVE only wakes, LOVE only calls to arms!

GEORGE R.

——Square, 1780.

LETTER

LETTER XI.

Mr. RALPH P— to To JOHN C——, Eſq.

Riots——diſagreeable ſituation of Mr. P—— GEORGE apprehended.

HOW happy are thoſe who, like you, from afar,
Only hear of this uproar, this rude civil war!——
A ſet of mad bigots, a lawleſs banditti,
Have plunder'd and ravag'd without any pity.
What ſhouting of ruffians, what burning of houſes,
What ſcreaming of daughters, what fainting of ſpouſes!
Cits, nobles and biſhops, were ſtruck with diſmay,
Nay 'twas fear'd ev'n the ſoldiers would all run away.

Laſt

Laſt week, ah how blind are we all to our fate!
I went with his Lordſhip to hear the debate.
I was ſtartled, I own, when I ſaw ſuch a crowd
Of hangdogs, and heard them all ſhouting ſo loud;
But ſoon as the peer, who ſat trembling within,
Was ſpy'd by theſe friends of religion and gin,
They ſeiz'd on the horſes, and dragging him out,
Like a football the poor Lord was banded about;
His coach, lin'd with ſattin, (indeed 'twas juſt new)
And my very beſt coat were quite ſpoil'd by the crew,
And I, poor *pilgarlick*, not ſuffer'd to go,
Without a rude cuff and an inſolent blow,
And curſes unnumber'd, from baſe fetid breath,
Strong with onions and garlick that ſtunk me to death:

Nay,

Nay, this was not all, a great *Proteſtant* laſs
All at once thruſt her maſculine fiſt through the glaſs;
And while, ſorely wounded, I bled like a pig,
A foe to the Pope ran away with my wig.——
I aſſure you 'tis likely to prove a bad place;
I've a plaiſter three inches in length on my face.

Next morning his Lordſhip ſet off with us all,
And his plate and his jewels, for——— Hall;
There we ſtay'd till laſt Monday, and liv'd quite in
clover,
When we heard that this terrible uproar was over.

I ſhall ſend you down letters and pamphlets in plenty,
Of newſpapers likewiſe ſome eighteen or twenty;

They'll tell you the whole from beginning to end;
Believe me I'm ſick of the ſubject my friend;
The thought of theſe Proteſtants ſtill breaks my reſt,
The ſound of *no popery* I hate and deteſt
More than wrathful POLEMICS the bare name of
GIBBON;
And I'm ſick at the ſight of a piece of blue ribbon.

But this I muſt tell you i'th' midſt of the clatter,
As I was—"Lord KITTY!—why—what is the
"matter!—
"What GEORGE!—my dear GEORGE! my ſupport
"and my joy,
"Taken up for a plot!—O unfortunate boy!"
But hold, what a fool am I! thus to ſpend time in
Exclaiming, and ſobbing and crying and rhyming!—

* *

* * * *

* * * *

—O Lord, my dear JACK, ſuch a dreadful affair!
I'm ſtill in a tremor I vow and declare:
Poor GEORGE, my dear nephew, ſo harmleſs and quiet,
Was ſeiz'd as a raſcal concern'd in the riot!
Our worthy young hoſt, when he heard the ſad tale,
With me flew to BOW-STREET, and got him to bail:
Poor fellow! but now, thanks be prais'd, all the worſt is
Quite over; my Lord has contented the Juſtice.

Adieu my dear JOHN, I ſhall ſoon write again,
But my hand ſhakes ſo now I can ſcarce hold my pen.

RALPH P——.

——Square, 1780.

LETTER XII.

Miſs KITTY R— to Miſs SALLY F—

The Camps—A modern Soldier——the Company.

LORD my dear! ſuch wild uproar
Sure was never heard before!——
Here's been the deuce and all to pay——
Something about the Pope they ſay.——
Indeed, the horrid barbarous noiſe
Put a ſtop to all my joys;
For we were forc'd away to drive,
Leſt we ſhould be burnt alive.

only

Only think, my dear, what fellows!
I hope they'll all come to the gallows!

But one good thing, indeed, they bring—
(O the ſweet enchanting thing!)
A CAMP in ev'ry place about one!——
Who, ye Gods! would be without one!

O how charming 'tis to ſee 'em
In the garden of MUSEUM!
O how ſweet, when almoſt dark
Walking thro' the whiten'd PARK!
O the lovely looking creatures!
With well-ſhap'd limbs, and well-ſhap'd features;

Bowing,

Bowing, ſmiling, ſoftly ſwearing,
Beneath our hats and bonnets ſtaring.
Ah ſilly woman! naughty varlet!
Why do'ſt thou doat on bits of ſcarlet?
But ſee the MAJOR comes up to me,
(Sure the dear man would undo me!)
Gales of perfume tell him near;
The air's in love with him, my dear,
For his ſoft form ſhe embraces,
Even at all public places,
And ſteals from him, and ſcatters round him,
Scents with ev'ry ſweet abounding!
But, indeed, you cannot gueſs
How complete the MAJOR's dreſs!
See how wide the hat is ſpread,
The monſtrous hat that hides his head:

With

With the owner in alliance,

It ſeems to bid his foes defiance:

Huge as for a giant made:——

At the loop the dear cockade——

Beneath the beaver, ſtretching wide

Three well-ſhap'd curls on either ſide,

Uninjur'd by the envious wind;

And O, the pretty tail behind!

Next his winning coat, behold,

Scarlet fac'd with blue and gold;

Two watch-ſtrings, gay with golden ſtitches,

Hanging dangling from his breeches,

(Breeches—ſure that ſounds abſurd——

Small-cloaths is the proper word)

Watch-ſtrings form'd of human hair,

Gift of ſome deluded fair;

Loaded too with pretty things
Trinkets, lockets, ſeals and rings:
On his finger ELOIZA——
Poor girl! nothing left to pleaſe her!
But who the praiſes can repeat,
Of dear *Artois*, that hide his feet,
Where ſilver, gold, and gems unite,
Blaze in the ſun, and blind the ſight!

He ſpeaks—his ruddy lips diſcloſe
Odours ſweeter than the roſe;
"Lovely creature, how d'ye do?——
"——Ah, dear MAJOR, is it you?"
"—Your ſlave—but was you in the garden
"When ——Sir GEORGE, I aſk your pardon——

"My

" My eyes were ſo intent upon her
" I did not ſee you, 'pon my honour:
" But will you ſo far favour me,
" And you Sir GEORGE, to ſip your tea
" This evening here in my MARQUEE?
" Then let's have muſick"—" O ſans doute!
" Baſſoon, clarinet, and flute"——
" Come, the what's his name"—" young *Paddy?*"—
" —No— I mean the *Yellow Laddie.*——
" *Gramachree*——'tis my delight.——
" And now I long for *Sable night*——
" O ye Gods, it charms my ear!——
" I die with pleaſure but to hear——
" —Pray Sir GEORGE, who's that that ſtares!——
" People give themſelves ſuch airs!——

" Can't

" Can't remember, 'pon my ſoul——

" —O 'tis lady RANTIPOLE."——

She that's in the ſpotted ſattin,

Walking with Miſs POLLY PATTEN;

POLLY, toaſt of *Lombard-ſtreet*——

How ſhe views her little feet,

With what an air ſhe waves her head,

Her eyes how black, her lips how red!

How white her teeth, (bewitching jade!

The beſt RUSPINI ever made.

Who's that fat man that ſtruts about ſo?——

'Tis the Baron BANGDOROUTZO;

He, who wanted to be rude

With his cook, an errant prude;

But the ſtout jade, I can tell ye,

Beat him almoſt to a jelly.——

As I live, there's Lady BANGDOG,
Hobling here with lawyer HANGDOG;
ROSIN too and lady PIDDLER,
She's always with ſome dirty fidler.
There's obſequious Doctor PANDAR
Making love to Lady GANDER.
How the beldame curls her whiſkers!——
Bleſs me! there's the two Miſs FRISKERS.
How genteel!——But what's that noiſe?——
Sure 'tis uncle's gothic voice——
"KATE, why KATE! they wait for you!"
I come, I come,—ſweet girl adieu——

CATHARINE R——

——Square, 1780.

LETTER

LETTER XIII.

Miſs RUTH P—— to Mrs. SUSAN S——

Lamentations of RUTH——*Dr.* PROMETHEUS——

WHEREVER I go, my dear SUSAN, I meet
Poor proteſtants hanging in every ſtreet:
O Lord! what a ſhame, that ſuch pious young fellows
In the cauſe of religion, ſhould come to the gallows.
They fain would perſuade me theſe grim viſag'd
martyrs,
Were puritan Scotchmen, or popiſh *upſtarters*.

But

But tho' from the morning to night they ſhould
chatter,
I'm determin'd I'll never believe no ſuch matter.
What! *Skipticks* engage in ſo godly a work?——
'Id as ſoon think there's virtue and truth in a Turk.
No, no, theſe were no ſuch republican people,
Who ſpurn at a ſurplice, and fly from a ſteeple;
But worthy reformers, who took it in hand,
To root out the Pope's horrid crew from the land.
What pity ſo noble a ſcheme ſhould not thrive!
I would they had burnt all the papiſts alive.

Ah, SUSAN, indeed, 'tis a ſin and a ſhame
Our Biſhops (but ſure they deſerve not the name!)
To ſcurvy diſſenters ſuch countenance give,
And ſuffer theſe vile papiſt wretches to live.

O Lord

O Lord! I could tear up the earth, when I think
That ſciſmatic prieſts ſhould have victuals and drink!
There's a terrible villain—one L——— they call
——— him———
(I wiſh all the plagues upon earth would befall him!)
A murd'rous apoſtate, who's grown ſo audacious
He boldly deſpiſes the great ATHANASIUS.———
And yet I am told that folks patiently hear him;
I would not, for never ſo much, go a-near him!
Indeed, could I once be ſo ſadly miſled,
I'm certain the roof would fall down on my head.
But this is my comfort—OLD HARRY I know
Will ſoon cram him down in his hot-houſe below.

* * * * * * *

O SUSAN,

O SUSAN,—I've found out the greateſt phyſician—
In troth I believe he's a ſort of magician;
For without any drugs, by his engine alone,
He cures all diſorders that ever were known.
In his houſe they are warbling all night and all day,
And there ſtands a fine lady, a goddeſs they ſay;
You'd think her all paint, ſhe's as ruddy a look,
As old Mrs. FURNACE, Squire TUNBELLY's cook.
But in truth it is only the bright flush of health,
Which the doctor aſſures us is better than wealth.
He proteſts on his honour, there were not a few ſick,
But yeſterday cur'd by a concert of muſic.
If piping ſhould fail, he proceeds a ſtep higher,
Grinds round his *'paratus*, and cures you with fire.
He drives off at once all diſorders that plague you;
He burns out hot fever, he burns out cold ague,

Sets

Sets fire to the palſy, and ſcorches decay,
And forces conſumption to gallop away.——
Miſs PATTY PINTOODLE declares, I can tell ye,
He's dried up her dropſy, and leſſen'd her belly:
Miſs FINCH was ſo hoarſe, ſhe could ſcarce ſcream a note,
And Counſellor HEM had a bur in his throat;
But a ſtroke from the doctor has quite done the thing—
The lawyer can plead, and the lady can ſing.
Sir SCATTERBRAIN SPATTER, the parliament man,
Was ſeiz'd with a looſeneſs whene'er he began.
The poor man could never go on with his ſpeech,
He was ſo taken up with this troubleſome breech;
But the orator now, unmoleſted, can rail,
Since this prince of phyſicians ſet fire to his tail.
The old Earl of PEERABOUT could not ſee clear,
But was always found *there*, when he ought to be *here*;

The

The Doctor's *colyrium* has open'd his eyes,
He knows when to ſit down, and knows when to
riſe;
And is now never ſeen when the houſes divide,
To be blind to his *duty*, and take the *wrong* ſide.
Miſs BARBARA DIEAWAY's nerves were ſo weak,
That ſhe ſeldom could move, nay ſhe ſcarcely could
ſpeak;
But rouz'd by this GALEN's moſt potent machine,
She's now grown as briſk and as blythe as a queen;
In public and private ſhe's friſking and prancing,
And now can endure the moſt heart-melting dancing.

'Twere endleſs to tell all the wonders he's done
Beyond all the doctor's ſtuff under the ſun.——

They fain would have had me, tho' then 'twas quite dark,

Receive a ſlight ſhock, or the fluid, or ſpark;

But I promis'd to viſit him when it was light,

For I was afraid of ſuch doings at night.——

He tells me each ſhock makes one ſtronger and ſtronger,

And enſures one at leaſt for an hundred years longer;

Yet ſurely on purpoſe to give him the lie,

Still obſtinate people continue to die.

But more than all this—he's a ſecret they ſay,

To better the breed—in a *fair honeſt way.*

In his houſe there are beds of invention moſt rare,

On purpoſe contriv'd for this *ſelf-ſame affair.*

But the Temple of Health is no punch houſe of Drury,

The Doctor would ſcorn ſuch dark deeds I aſſure ye.

His

His couches electric are *purely* design'd
For the well-meaning pair holy wedlock has join'd:
He has drawn up inſtructions that huſbands may know
What faults they commit, and what duties they owe.

The Lady of Dr. DANDROWSY, I'm told,
Has ſent, by her good man, five pieces of gold,
Intending, without loſs of time, to produce
His important advice for her own ſpecial uſe.

You'll wonder to hear, but indeed it is true,
The Doctor's no private advantage in view;
He takes fees indeed—but that's merely to live,
That he ſtill may remain his aſſiſtance to give;

But his principal object, you'll certainly find,
Is the comfort, the health, and the good of mankind.

RUTH P——

——Square, 1780.

LETTER XIV.

RALPH P—— to JOHN C—— Eſq;

PERORATION.

WHAT a blockhead was I for amuſement to roam!
Ah ideot! why was't thou not quiet at home?
I'll ſwear you may ſail from Old ENGLAND to SIAM,
And ne'er be ſo ſick of your journey as I am.
You may venture your bacon at fam'd OTAHEITE,
There Indians untutor'd are kind and polite t'ye.
They're polite to you here, with a vengeance 'tis true,
But the raſcals have always ſome miſchief in view;
The modiſh barbarians of this poliſh'd place
Stab home to the heart, while they ſmile in the face.

Ah,

Ah, would you believe it? my couſin ſo civil,
So kind, ſo polite, is as black as the devil;
And KITTY, in whom I ſuch confidence put,
Is a forward, audacious, and impudent ſlut!
Yes, my once pretty roſe, my once innocent maid,
Sign'd and ſeal'd her diſgrace at the laſt maſquerade;
A prey to my Lord, moſt abandon'd of beaus,
A victim to flattery, love, and fine cloaths!
O why this vile journey did I ſtand their friend in?
But who would have dreamt of ſo tragic an ending!
I ſought, I enquir'd, till quite out of breath,
Diſorder'd, afflicted, and jaded to death,
And GEORGE ran about like a dog in a fair,
In ſearch of this wench, fled no mortal knew where:
At length we diſcover'd, the ſaucy young gipſy
Set off with my Lord when he'd made her half tipſy,

And leaſt we might think it worth while to go a'ter
They've taken a trip to'ther ſide of the water.—

A fine pretty age this! as eaſy as may be,
Poor virtue is trap'd like an overgrown baby.
Our nobles ſtand foremoſt the patrons of vice,
Their buſineſs is wenching, their Gods are the dice!

O fond fooliſh woman! though over-wiſe never,
Now ten times more ſilly, more wanton than ever;
Or faſting or full, you can never be eaſy,
Unleſs you've a lover to plague, and to pleaſe you;
Sure the deuce has poſſeſs'd ye to think there's ſuch
bliſs in
The greateſt of follies, embracing and kiſſing!

My

My Lady's ſurpriz'd that we make ſuch a clatter
Concerning ſo *trivial* and *common* a matter.——
What philoſophy ſhines in the wives of this town!——
Ah ſurely the world is turn'd quite upſide down!

RUTH, fooliſh old creature! (but proverbs have told one,
Of all fools there's none to compare with the old one)
Though ſhe went ſick to bed, the ſad news had ſo ſhock'd her,
Rode early next morning to church with the DOCTOR:
Yes now her firſt wiſh is accompliſh'd—She's wedded,
But I hope from my ſoul that ſhe'll never be bedded.
Such an old water-wag-tail I cannot abide ——
Is a gorgon-fac'd harridan fit for a bride?——
I'd as ſoon have a death's head and bones by my ſide.

O! may the good doctor truſt all her eſtate
To bankrupts, who here have been plenty of late;
May he never enjoy one poor ſixpenny piece
That was meant for her nephew and run-away niece!
And may the old wedded rib get nothing by't;
But, cheated of all her expected delight,
Be beat all the day, and tormented all night!

GEORGE now the ſole heir to my real eſtate,
(Tho' I'll not quite abandon unfortunate KATE)
Is eager with me to depart in a trice,
And fly from this temple of folly and vice:
No pomp can allure, no town beauties can fire,
The varlet's ſtill true to your darling MARIA.

Adieu

Adieu my dear friend—we to-morrow ſet off,
Tho', ſeeking this girl, I have got a ſad cough;
For riding poſt horſes thro' all ſorts of weather,
I caught cold, and loſt great abundance of leather.
I'm flay'd like a martyr—of ſkin not a button,
While I'm writing I've two or three cuſhions to ſit on.

Once more then farewell—but if ever I'm known
Again to ſet foot in this villainous town,
May I take to my arms a gay buxom young wife,
To ſpend all my fortune and ſhorten my life.

May ſhe joy to perplex me,
Torment, teaze and vex me,
Plant my forehead with horns,
My pillow with thorns;

May

May I ſtudy in vain to get rid of the evil,
And wiſh myſelf ten times a day at the devil.

RALPH P——.

——Square, 1780.

FINIS.

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